United Nations A/59/PV.104

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

104th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 22 June 2005, at 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/59/668/Add.14 and 15)

The President (*spoke in French*): I invite the attention of the General Assembly to documents A/59/668/Add.14 and 15, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communications contained in documents A/59/668 and addenda 1 to 13, Togo, Mauritania and the Republic of Moldova have made the necessary payments to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in these documents?

It was so decided.

Reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and the Fifth Committee

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly will consider the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on agenda item 77 and the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 106, 108, 123 to 127, 129 to 132 (a), 133 to 137, 153 to 155 and 107.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mrs. Denisa Hutănová of Slovakia, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Fifth Committee before the Assembly.

Mrs. Hutănová (Slovakia): I have the honour to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee during the second part of the resumed fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly. During the course of its resumed session, from 2 May to 8 June 2005, the Committee held 12 formal meetings and numerous informal meetings.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/233 of 23 December 1994, the resumed session of the Fifth Committee was devoted primarily to the consideration of issues related to the financing of United Nations peacekeeping missions and related peacekeeping issues. The Committee considered the financing of 16 peacekeeping operations, as well as peacekeeping-related and other issues.

On agenda item 106, entitled "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors", in particular with regard to sub-item (a) and the report of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations peacekeeping operations, in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/59/588/Add.1, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Under agenda item 108, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005", in paragraph 8 of

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its report A/59/448/Add.4, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft resolutions, entitled "Special subjects and questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005" and "Capital master plan", which were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

In paragraph 21 of its report contained in document A/59/532/Add.1, under agenda item 123, entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations", the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of five draft resolutions. Draft resolution I, entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: cross-cutting issues"; draft resolution II, entitled "Peacekeeping Reserve Fund"; draft resolution III, entitled "Reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment"; draft resolution IV, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy" and draft resolution V, entitled "Support account for peacekeeping operations", were all were adopted without a vote.

In paragraph 22 of the same document, the Committee recommends the adoption of two draft decisions: draft decision I, entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations; Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.53 on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: cross-cutting issues"; and draft decision II, entitled "Updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions as at 30 June 2004", both of which were adopted without a vote.

With regard to the draft proposals on the financing of peacekeeping operations, I should like to inform the General Assembly that, with the exception of that relating to item 135 (b), entitled "United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", all of the draft proposals were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The reports of the Fifth Committee are presented under the following items: item 124, "Financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission and the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola"; item 125, "Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina"; item 126, "Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus"; item 127, "Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo"; item 129, "Financing of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor"; item 130, "Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea"; item 131, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia"; sub-item (a), entitled "United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission", of item 132, entitled "Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991)"; item 133, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo"; item 134, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia"; sub-item (a), entitled "United Nations Disengagement Observer Force", and sub-item (b), entitled "United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", of item 135, entitled "Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East"; item 136, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone"; item 137, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara"; item 153, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Operation in Burundi"; item 154, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire"; and item 155, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti".

Regarding sub-item 135 (b), entitled "United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/59/838. As indicated in paragraph 8 of that report, the Committee decided to retain the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 3, 4 and 13 of draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.52 in a single recorded vote of 70 in favour, 3 against and 50 abstentions. In paragraph 10 of the same report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution that was adopted by the Committee by a recorded vote of 128 in favour, 2 against and 3 abstentions.

In paragraph 5 of its report contained in document A/59/652/Add.2, on agenda item 107, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", the Fifth Committee recommends the adoption of a draft decision entitled "Questions deferred for future consideration", which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The President (*spoke in French*): If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committees and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee".

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Committees, unless the Secretariat is notified otherwise in advance. That means that, where recorded or separate votes were taken, we will do the same. I also hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Committees.

Agenda item 77 (*continued*)

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/59/472/Add.2)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/840)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 7 of its report. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution is contained in document A/59/840.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution entitled "Comprehensive review on a strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations".

The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/300).

The President (*spoke in French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 77?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has thus concluded consideration of all the reports of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

Agenda item 106 (*continued*)

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/588/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/264B).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 106.

Agenda item 108 (*continued*)

Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/448/Add.4)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Special subjects and questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005".

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 59/294).

The President (*spoke in French*): We turn next to draft resolution II, entitled "Capital master plan".

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 59/295).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 108.

Agenda item 123

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/532/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it five draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 21 of its report and two draft decisions recommended by the Committee in paragraph 22 of the same report.

As I mentioned earlier, the General Assembly, after taking action on draft resolutions I to IV, will consider the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on agenda item 77 (A/59/472/Add.2), and will thereafter revert to the report of the Fifth Committee on item 123, to take action on the remaining one draft resolution and two draft decisions.

We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to IV.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: cross-cutting issues".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 59/296).

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft resolution II is entitled "Peacekeeping Reserve Fund".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 59/297).

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft resolution III is entitled "Reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution III without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 59/298).

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft resolution IV is entitled "Financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution IV without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 59/299).

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft resolution V is entitled "Support account for peacekeeping operations".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution V without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution V was adopted (resolution 59/301).

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft decision I is entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.53 on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: cross-cutting issues".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft decision II is entitled "Updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions as at 30 June 2004".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 123.

I call on the representative of South Africa, who wishes to speak in explanation of position.

Ms. Lock (South Africa): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group on agenda item 123 in explanation of position after the adoption of resolution 59/296 on cross-cutting issues, contained in document A/59/532/Add.1.

The African Group wishes to thank the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Morteza Mirmohammad, for the able and professional manner in which he has coordinated the consideration of the Committee of that agenda item.

The draft resolution represents an important step towards increased oversight by the Fifth Committee of the management and functioning of peacekeeping operations. It will also form a point of departure for the Committee's future consideration of and approach to peacekeeping policy issues. The Group therefore deems it important to put on record its position concerning some of the matters contained in the draft resolution.

The Group wishes to reaffirm the principle that each and every peacekeeping budget submission should be considered on the basis of the financial justifications contained therein and with full recognition of the specificities and complexities of individual missions, their mandates and the unique environment that they function in. This has been a long-standing position of the African Group and the basis for negotiations in the Committee. We are encouraged that the Committee, in its consideration of the cross-cutting issues, maintained that approach.

The Group further welcomes the recognition by the Committee that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes, where mandated by the Security Council, are critical to the success of peacekeeping operations and require a coordinated approach in the field. We trust that the relevant actors in the field, within and outside the United Nations system, will make every effort to further refine their respective roles and improve the coordination of DDR efforts over the short and longer terms.

We underline that the note of the Secretary-General defining disarmament, demobilization and reinsertion activities for budgetary purposes is necessary to ensure that the Committee take informed decisions when it receives budgetary requests, taking into account the ongoing discussions aimed at further developing those concepts.

The Group also wishes to emphasize the need for further refinement of the concept of integrated peacekeeping missions to ensure greater clarity among the various actors in the field. We look forward to efforts being exerted in further refining that concept and implementing it when mandated by the Security Council in a fashion that serves the endeavours of the international community in the field of peacekeeping.

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 123.

Agenda item 124

Financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission and the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/831)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 4 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft decision. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President (*spoke in French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 124?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 125

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/832)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/302).

The President (*spoke in French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 125?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 126 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/770/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/284B).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 126.

Agenda item 127 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/771/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/285B).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 127.

Agenda item 129

Financing of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/531/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/13B).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 129.

Agenda item 130

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/833)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/303).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 130.

Agenda item 131

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/834)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/304).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 131.

Agenda item 132

Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991)

(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/835)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft decision entitled "Financing of the Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission". The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 132.

Agenda item 133 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/772/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/286B).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 133.

Agenda item 134

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/836)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/305).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 134.

Agenda item 135

Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/837)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution, which is entitled "Financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force". The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/306).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 135.

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/838)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 12 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The draft resolution is entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon".

A single separate vote has been requested on the fourth preambular paragraph and on operative paragraphs 3, 4 and 13 of the draft resolution. Is there any objection to that request? There is none.

I shall now put to the vote the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 3, 4 and 13, on which a single separate vote has been requested. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tonga, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay.

The fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 3, 4 and 13 were retained by 77 votes to 2, with 47 abstentions.

[Subsequently the delegation of Jamaica advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President (*spoke in French*): I now put to the vote the draft resolution as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Tonga.

The draft resolution was adopted by 126 votes to 2, with 1 abstention (resolution 59/307).

[Subsequently the delegation of Jamaica advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolutions just adopted.

Mr. Elji (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to make a statement concerning the decisions taken under agenda item 135.

My country joined in the consensus regarding the adoption of resolution 59/306, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force", and voted in favour of resolution 59/307, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon", on the basis of the principle that we have always cited: the responsibility for financing those two forces should lie with the party that was the aggressor at the time of their creation. That is in accordance with the general principles set out in General Assembly resolution 1874 (S-IV), dated 27 June 1963.

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 135.

Agenda item 136

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/527/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/14B).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 136.

Agenda item 137

Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/839)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/308).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 137.

Agenda item 153 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Operation in Burundi

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/528/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/15B).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 153.

Agenda item 154 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/529/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/16B).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 154.

Agenda item 155 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/530/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 59/17B).

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 155.

Agenda item 107 (*continued*)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/652/Add.2)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft decision, entitled "Questions deferred for future consideration". The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 107.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Fifth Committee before it.

Agenda item 156

Multilingualism

Report of the Secretary-General (A/58/363)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/58/93 and Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.62)

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of France to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.62.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the fact that the General Assembly is meeting today in order to officially adopt a text that is important for our Organization — important not only for its day-to-day work, but also in terms of the values that it represents.

As the Assembly knows, it was the intention of the founding fathers, in establishing the United Nations, to create a forum for dialogue and discussion — a forum that, in the words of the Charter, would encourage all peoples "to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours". Languages play a crucial role in giving real meaning to this appeal for openness because they are much more than a means of communication. By bringing people together, they give expression to an intellectual and moral vision of the world.

Striving for multilingualism means, primarily, striving for respect for cultural diversity, for the promotion of universal values — in brief, for a new humanism. Reinforcing multilingualism also means defending ourselves against the risks of uniformity, whatever they may be, and uniting in our respect for the identity of each other. Linguistic and cultural diversity can reconcile without diluting, bring together without eclipsing and unite without replacing.

Under agenda item 156, the General Assembly will today adopt a draft resolution that we believe is both ambitious and balanced. It is ambitious because, for the first time, it stresses the need to fully implement the provisions of the resolutions that set out the linguistic rules for our common home, with regard to both the working languages of the Secretariat and the official languages of the United Nations. It is ambitious because the text, although not exhaustive, covers the entire spectrum of issues relating to languages in the United Nations: the work of the Secretariat, communication among delegations, modalities for recruitment, Internet sites and so forth.

The text is ambitious also because it is not limited only to the official languages of the Organization. In a spirit of openness, and in order to increase the impact of the universal message of the United Nations, Member States would take note with appreciation of the work done by the United Nations information centres.

The text is also balanced, because it does not alter the overall philosophy of the rules governing the Organization, but reaffirms its fundamental principles and calls on the Secretary-General fully to implement them.

The draft resolution is balanced also because it reflects the two principles that guided our actions during the negotiation process, transparency and collegiality: transparency, because our meetings were open to all; and collegiality, because all were able to contribute their added value to the text.

I welcomed the fact that a large number of delegations participated on a regular basis in the informal meetings conducted by the French delegation. I believe that that attests to the interest of Member States in the issue of multilingualism. I am therefore pleased that, by combining intellectual standards with the power of consensus, we were able to reinforce those values in the draft resolution and to keep multilingualism alive, since it is the cornerstone of our Organization.

Finally, I thank the very many sponsors of the draft resolution who wished to demonstrate their full support. One hundred and two Member States, including five that came forward today, sponsored the resolution. That sends a strong message, and we appreciate it. I am convinced that it will be fully

reflected and concretely manifested in the daily work of our Organization.

Mr. Siv (United States of America): The United States is a country of great ethnic diversity. As such, we support and fully appreciate multilingualism. Nearly 47 million Americans speak a language other than English at home. In fact, English is just one of nearly 180 languages spoken in the United States. Residents of Queens, across the river from here, constitute the greatest level of ethnic diversity anywhere in America. There, 46 per cent were born abroad, coming from over 100 countries. Most notably, nearly 140 languages are spoken in Queens, making it one of the most diverse places in the world. In no similar area will one find represented so many different ethnicities and cultures. As former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said in this Hall on 1 October 2001: "Americans are not a single ethnic group. Americans are not one race or one religion. Americans emerge from all nations."

We fully respect the principal of multilingualism and relevant United Nations rules and regulations. However, my delegation notes that the application of multilingualism in the United Nations context does not equate with universality or cultural diversity. When considering multilingualism, we believe that the United Nations should continue to keep in mind the needs of those whose principal language of education is not one of the six official languages. We should be careful not to take decisions having the effect of diminishing the universal and multicultural character of this Organization.

Mr. Iosifov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Multilingualism in the United Nations, manifested in particular in the use of its official and working languages, is the foundation of the Organization's universality and an important means of achieving the fundamental purposes of its Charter. The Organization's 60 years of experience have shown that, unless it pays due attention to maintaining linguistic diversity in its day-to-day work, the harmonious integration of a growing number of countries into its practical activities will hardly be possible.

Ensuring parity among the six official United Nations languages is an intrinsic element of preserving the genuine diversity of languages in the Organization, which includes also providing for unimpeded communication in the official languages among the representatives of Member States in intergovernmental and expert bodies through high-quality conference services and the attainment of linguistic parity in the design of the United Nations internet sites and other areas of its information and outreach activities. We note in that respect the disturbing trend of chronic delays in the simultaneous issuance of United Nations documents in all official languages, as well as the emerging practice of issuing advance copies of documents, including reports to the Security Council, in English alone. Specific and immediate action is called for.

The maintenance and strengthening of the principle of multilingualism in the Organization are also essential to ensuring that the peoples of the world receive full information about the Organization's work and to enhancing international support. Nor must it be forgotten that the principle of parity among the Organization's official languages requires equal treatment for the linguistic services of the Secretariat by ensuring that its resource and staffing needs are met. To a great extent, that will determine the quality of the services provided to Member States.

Of course, the item on multilingualism is by no means restricted to issues of the United Nations official languages. The draft resolution before us today rightly recalls a number of provisions of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. Inter alia, it reaffirms the right of all persons to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination, and to be genuinely able to receive education in their own language. Unfortunately, it must be noted that, more than 12 years after the adoption of the Declaration, there remain countries in the United Nations for which that reminder has lost none of its relevance.

Russia attaches great importance to genuine multilingualism in the Organization and the world community as a whole as a means of attaining mutual understanding among peoples, exchanging knowledge, values and positive experience, and achieving mutual intellectual enrichment on the basis of a dialogue among cultures on an equal footing. We believe that the draft resolution on multilingualism is a serious step forward towards achieving those important ends of our Organization, and Russia, as a co-sponsor, calls on Member States to support it unanimously.

Mr. Oubida (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): It is a true honour for me to address the Assembly on the issue of multilingualism.

I should like first to welcome the spirit of cooperation, understanding and concord demonstrated by all delegations throughout the consultations on the draft resolution before the General Assembly. I should also like to congratulate the coordinator, the Permanent Representative of France, who demonstrated the essential patience and vision without which we should never have reached consensus on the draft resolution on multilingualism.

Communication, everywhere and always, has been the best way for people to exchange ideas in the ongoing quest for peace, security and understanding at the national and international levels. The importance of today's draft resolution reflects that spirit. For an Organization such as the United Nations, multilingualism is a powerful channel for the defence and preservation of linguistic diversity and a special tool for dialogue among cultures. It promotes unity in diversity and international understanding, and reinforces the implementation of such United Nations instruments as the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.

Multilingualism is one of the foundations of the culture of Burkina Faso. Burkina Faso is proud of having some 60 languages in our country, which clearly reflects the freedom and cultural richness of its people. With regard to sustainable development policy, the Government has made multilingualism a tool to effectively address the expectations of each linguistic group, bringing together the requisite energies to build a free, prosperous and peaceful society.

My delegation is of course proud to have shared its experience with other delegations during the negotiating process on this draft resolution on multilingualism. We are prepared to take any steps, and to participate in any initiative, to strengthen the practice of multilingualism in the United Nations system, as well as within our own States. Burkina Faso would therefore like to call upon all delegations to unreservedly support draft resolution A/59/L.62, which has been submitted to the Assembly for adoption.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker on this item.

The General Assembly shall now proceed to take action on draft resolution on A/59/L.62.

I would like to inform members that, since it was introduced, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/59/L.62: Brazil, Croatia, Guyana, Saint Lucia, Paraguay and Ukraine.

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.62?

Draft resolution A/59/L.62 was adopted (resolution 59/309).

The President (*spoke in French*): Before calling on speakers in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Akira Yamamoto: (Japan): My delegation is pleased that this resolution was adopted by consensus. We wish to thank the sponsors and all parties that participated in the drafting consultations for their resolve to reach consensus on the resolution.

As mentioned in the preamble of the resolution, we the Member States recognize that the United Nations pursues multilingualism as a means of promoting, protecting and preserving diversity of languages and cultures globally. We also recognize that genuine multilingualism promotes unity in diversity and international understanding. Therefore, multilingualism is an important item on the agenda of the General Assembly that we think requires careful consideration and time.

As part of our collective efforts to streamline the agenda of the General Assembly, my delegation suggested that the agenda item on multilingualism be triennialized. That suggestion is not reflected in the resolution just adopted. However, we hope that such a suggestion will be revisited during our discussions scheduled for the sixty-first session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Yoo (Republic of Korea): First of all, my delegation wishes to express our deep appreciation to the French delegation, the coordinator of the draft resolution submitted under agenda item 156, entitled "Multilingualism", for its far-reaching endeavour to reach consensus on the text through a number of consultations. We would also like to thank the other

delegations that participated in the negotiations in a constructive and cooperative manner.

As the resolution reflects the concerns raised by like-minded countries, including mine, the Republic of Korea joined the consensus. At the same time, I wish to express my delegation's full support for the points raised by the delegations of the United States of America and Japan.

My delegation believes that, in order to achieve genuine multilingualism, the resolution must also give full consideration to languages other than official United Nations languages. Other languages are used every day by a vast number of people around the world. Along with like-minded countries, we sincerely hope that the next draft resolution on this matter will take on board these aspects and thus become more balanced.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to conclude its consideration of agenda item 156?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.